

## Energy Saving Tips

Tennesseans continue to feel the pinch at the pump in the wake of the recent hurricanes, but high energy prices are expected to result in high utility bills this winter. Experts predict that utility costs will skyrocket by 70 percent this winter, so as we brace for the cold months ahead, we've compiled a list of valuable, energy-saving tips to help keep your energy bill manageable.

1. Adjust your thermostat to 68 degrees this winter. Each degree above 68 can add as much as 4% to your overall energy costs. Heating your home typically accounts for over half of your utility bill, so wearing layers inside, putting extra covers on the bed and keeping the thermostat down can save you hundreds of dollars on utilities over the winter months.
2. Be careful of the fireplace. A roaring fire may seem like an inexpensive source of warmth, but it also sucks heated, indoor air up the chimney and out of the house like a vacuum.
3. Adjust your water heater to 120 degrees or "warm," and take short showers instead of baths. This saves both water and energy.
4. Change your air filters. Dirt and grime reduce air flow and waste energy. Also, make sure that furniture or drapes aren't blocking your radiator or heating vents.
5. Caulk around exterior doors and windows. Caulking is an inexpensive way to make sure heat doesn't escape your home.
6. Close storm windows and doors as tightly as possible. If you still feel a draft, try stuffing a rolled-up towel at the bottom to stop cold air from getting inside.
7. Weatherstrip around doors leading to the outside, furnace or attic. Also, attach door sweeps and cover through-the-wall air conditioners to keep out cold air.
8. Spray expandable insulation around holes leading outside, to the furnace or attic.
9. Make sure that vents are closed in rooms that aren't being used. Keep doors into those rooms closed, as well.
10. Turn the heat down or off if you will be out of the house for more than four hours. For as little as \$40, you can purchase and install a programmable thermostat that will automatically adjust temperatures throughout the day according to your schedule.
11. Inspect your ducts for leaks or tears. These can add hundreds of dollars to your utility bill.

## Utility Assistance

The elderly, disabled, children and people with chronic illnesses are often the first to suffer from severe weather. As we approach the winter months, a combination of cold temperatures and rising natural gas prices will hit these vulnerable groups particularly hard. Help is available. In addition to the conservation measures outlined here, you may qualify for energy assistance through the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. Funding for this program and other energy assistance is provided through the

Shelby County Community Services Agency, the Salvation Army and MIFA. Memphis Light Gas & Water can work with you on a payment plan. For help on how you may qualify for utility assistance, please contact the Congressional office at (901) 544-4131. For more information on how to save money on your home energy bills, go to [www.house.gov/ford](http://www.house.gov/ford), [www.energysavers.gov](http://www.energysavers.gov) or [www.mlgw.com](http://www.mlgw.com).